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The Republic of Andorre.

Paris letters state that a project is in contemplation to suppress the little Republic of Andorre, which, for more than a thousand years has existed in all its original integrity among the Pyrenees mountains, which separate France and Spain, and to divide the territory between its two most powerful neighbors. Such a proceeding would be political sacrilege, and we trust that the independence of the State, which for so long a period has remained a historical curiosity, like San Marino, in Italy, is not now to be wrested from it by the rude hands of violence.

The name of the Andorre republic is probably familiar to but few of our readers. Comparatively insignificant in size and commercial importance, and containing but eight thousand inhabitants, it has never excited the cupidity of kings or occupied in any way a prominent position in the political world. It is situated on the south declivity of the Pyrenees range, between the department of Ariège, in France, and the district of Urgel, in Spain. It is about thirty-three miles square, and comprises three of the wildest and most picturesque valleys of the Pyrenees, surrounded by high and almost inaccessible peaks. It is watered by several small rivers, and Andorre, the principal town, has a population of two thousand.

The State contains little arable land, but has a considerable extent of excellent pasture ground, sheltered by vast forests of fir, and the inhabitants depend chiefly for subsistence upon their flocks and iron mines, the product of the latter finding a ready market in Spain. The State is divided into six communes, and the government is invested in the hands of twenty-four councilors, four from each commune, who are chosen for life. This council elect two Syndics, or executive officers, who convoke the assemblies, and carry on the government when the council is not sitting.

The republic of Andorre was founded by Charlemagne in the year 790, he making it independent of the neighboring princes, as a reward for services rendered him in his march against the Moors of Spain, by supplying his troops with provisions, and taking care of their wounded. For a thousand and three years, France still held a sort of protectorate over the State, but in 1793 even this was abandoned, and the republic for a time stood entirely alone. During this period they preserved their attachment to France, furnishing the French armies with guides and provisions during the war in Spain, and resisted the violation of their territory by the Spaniards. At length they prevailed on Napoleon to re-establish the ancient order of things, and in 1806 Andorre was again declared to be a "Republic connected with France."

The Andorrian people are simple and severe in their manners and customs. The great majority of them are unable to read and write, and live as their forefathers did a thousand years ago. Their wealth consists of sheep, cattle, and iron mines. Each family acknowledges a chief who succeeds by right of primogeniture, and they are so far advocates of women's rights that no bachelors are admitted to any share in the management of public affairs. The doctrine of equality is nowhere more practically enforced than there.

The principal Andorrian houses have continued for centuries without any change in their fortunes, *ni plus riche, ni plus pauvre*; the poorest of the people are so assisted and their wants so supplied by their more opulent neighbors, that they never feel the pangs of poverty. The individuals of both sexes are strong and well proportioned. Crime is rare, and all disputes are settled by the Syndics. The men are all liable to serve in the militia if required, and every head of a family is obliged to have in his possession, at all times, a musket and a certain quantity of powder and ball.

The primitive style of living of the Andorrians has, until within a few years, shut out from their midst the vices and corruptions of cities. But of late, it is said, as the inhabitants have been brought more into contact with the civilized world, they have become dissatisfied with the scanty subsistence which their iron mines and farms have hitherto afforded them, and many of them have engaged in the illegal pursuit of smuggling—a profession which they are well qualified, by their physical training among the mountains, to pursue with success.

It is this illegal traffic, we believe, together with sundry serious affrays which have occurred between the smugglers and the French and Spanish officers of the customs, which has caused those two nations to entertain the idea of suppressing the republic, and dividing the territory between them.—If this is done San Marino will be without a rival.

"The Fortune of a Day."

About a month ago it was announced that a poor mechanic, residing in Cincinnati, named William L. Walker, had received intelligence of the death of an uncle in Baltimore, by which he came into the possession of \$9,000, all in cash. He immediately came on to Baltimore, it is said, and finding that he could not get possession of the money for six months, sold his claim for \$8,000, cash—thus losing \$1,000. The Cincinnati Gazette says:

"Overjoyed at the success which had attended him, he hastened back to his home. Five hundred dollars was expended the next day after his return in purchasing new furniture, &c., for his house. The old furniture was sent to Woodruff's, and disposed of at auction, the whole being sold for forty-seven dollars, such was its inferior character.—Walker, with his little family, rented a house on Longworth street, at \$300 a year, and expended quite a sum of money in having it repainted and whitewashed.

"Walker, feeling himself independent enough to play the gentleman, commenced frequenting the saloons and restaurants on Third street in the day time, and the theater at night. He made acquaintances speedily, and very liberally treated them to oysters and other refreshments, and, in return, his new friends invited him to play cards and billiards at their expense. The new sphere in which he was enjoying himself so eclipsed his better judgment that he was soon persuaded to visit the gambling rooms. At first he won nearly every game, and accumulated nearly \$300. Night after night he continued visiting these sinks of iniquity, one of which is located on Third street, until he had lost over \$6,000 of the fortune he had received a few weeks since. Walker says that, when he had lost \$4,000 of the money, he would have stopped had he not expected to get the sum back again by continuing the game. He has now, however, stopped, and has sought redress in one of our courts of justice. Besides the fine furniture, clothing, &c., he purchased, he has only \$1,700 of the \$8,000 left; but promises hereafter to remain at home, and not squander what is left, but resume his daily labor and attend closely to the interests and welfare of his family."

EXTRAVAGANCE.—There is not a country in the world where the people are becoming so extravagant in the mode of dressing and living as in the United States. It is one of the worst signs of the times. The habits of the mushroom aristocracy are really disgusting. How ludicrous it looks to see boys sporting diamonds by the thousand dollars worth at a time, whose fathers were accustomed to wheel-barrows, and whose children are pretty certain to be in the work-house.—And girls—silly, simple things, weighed down with jewels and bracelets—whose mothers broke their backs at the wash-tubs, scouring floors and picking oakum. The real substantial aristocracy never indulge in such fopperies and fooleries.

Capture of Venetian Brides.

According to ancient custom, the nuptials of the nobles and principal citizens of Venice were always celebrated on the same day of the year. The eve of the Purification was consecrated to this public festival, and the State annually increased the general joy of the occasion by endowing twelve maidens with marriage portions. In the morning gondolas elegantly ornamented assembled from all parts of the city at the Episcopal church of Olivolo. The affianced pairs disembarked amidst the sound of music; their relations and friends, in their most splendid habiliments, swelled their retinue; the rich presents made to the brides, their jewels and ornaments were proudly borne for display; and the body of the people, unarmed, and thoughtless of danger, followed the glad procession. The Istrian pirates, acquainted with the existence of this annual festival, had the boldness to prepare an ambush for the nuptial train in the city itself. They secretly arrived over night at an uninhabited islet, near the church of Olivolo, and lay hidden behind it with their barks until the procession entered the church, when, darting from their concealment, they rushed into the sacred edifice through all its doors, tore the shrieking brides from the arms of their defenceless lovers, possessed themselves of the jewels which had been displayed in the festal pomp, and immediately put to sea with their fair captives and booty. But a deadly revenge overtook them.

The Doge, Pietro Caniando III, had been present at the ceremony; he shared in the fury and indignation of the affianced youths; they flew to arms, and throwing themselves under his conduct into their vessels, came up with the spoilers in the lagoons of Cairo. A frightful massacre ensued; not a life among the pirates was spared; and the victors returned in triumph with their brides to the church of Olivolo. A procession of the maidens of Venice revived for many centuries the recollection of this deliverance on the eve of Purification. But the Doge was not satisfied with the punishment which he had inflicted on the Istriots. He entered vigorously upon the resolution of clearing the Adriatic of all the pirates who infested it; he conquered part of Dalmatia; and he transmitted to his successors, with the ducal crown, the duty of consummating his design.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—RUNNING IT INTO THE GROUND.—We are informed by one who has had the curiosity to count them, that there are one hundred and sixty-one "To Let" bills posted on buildings in Broadway alone, and that there has not been so many unrented stores in that street at any time since the great crisis of 1836-7, as at the present. This is the natural result of the exorbitant rents that have prevailed in that great thoroughfare. Only a year ago, and the common price of a first floor, 20 by 80, in a good location, was 4,500 per annum; of a whole building 25 to 80 or 100 feet, ten to twelve thousand dollars; and we know of one instance in which the owner of a fine edifice, situated not far from Canal street, refused to fix a definite price for the store, (20 by about 45 feet,) because he had been offered so much more than he had designed asking—one applicant proposing to pay \$6,000, and to deposit \$20,000 worth of good stock as collateral security for the payment of the rent—and "he didn't know where the excitement would stop." The store has never yet been occupied; has a "To Lease" notice on it at the present moment, and may be had, doubtless, for half the amount so repeatedly offered and spurned.

There was a literal truth as well as wit in the observation of a friend, who, on being told that the rent of a store he was examining would be \$6,000, looked down into its deep sub-cellar, and expressed the belief that "they were running the thing into the ground."—[N. Y. Eve. Post, 23d,

An Indigestible Meal

An immense anaconda recently arrived in Boston from the neighborhood of the Congo river in Africa. It is said that his length is between twenty and twenty-five feet, with a girth of thirty inches in the largest part of his body. There are a few circumstances connected with this great reptile stranger since his arrival, which are worth chronicling. Just before leaving his native land he took a hearty meal of a dog, and no other food for seven months after. About the first of October this king of snakes arrived in Boston, and was lodged in a large case with very strong glass walls and a double English milled blanket, folded in four thicknesses, furnished for his bed. On the 20th of November, Mr. Sears, the proprietor, thought it was full time to tempt his appetite, and therefore introduced a rabbit into his den just at evening. On viewing the interior the following morning, the blanket was missing, while the rabbit was still alive. On Wednesday, seven days after, it was discharged, whole and unimpaired, after a circuitous journey through an intestinal tube of nearly one hundred and fifty feet. It may now be seen in the apartment, being six feet wide by seven in length.

Since that period he has exhibited excellent health, and has devoured a fowl. Every day he drinks about three quarts of water, sucking it all up at once. When an animal is given for food to one of this family of serpents it is eyed intently for an instant, and then the poor trembling creature is suddenly crushed in the huge folds of the terrible monster, the cracking of the bones being distinctly heard at quite a distance. Thus prepared for swallowing, the body is still held in a coil, which is equivalent to a hand, and kept steady, while it is gradually sucked down the throat of the animal into the stomach, where it is slowly digested. It is the opinion of Mr. Sears, that when the anaconda sprang at the rabbit mentioned above, by some mistake in calculation the latter escaped and the edge of the blanket was seized by the teeth. When these are once engaged, being for the holders and not for mastication, it is quite impossible to disengage them; and hence whatever is once drawn into the mouth must necessarily go down the throat. Even the muscles of deglutition seem to act independently of volition, and urge the morsel along by strong, convulsive peristaltic contractions. —[Boston Surgical and Medical Journal.

TARSUS.—Tarsus, the birth place of Paul, and once no mean city, has fallen from its ancient dignity. Yet from a distance, few places in all that country present a more inviting appearance. It is embedded in the verdure of its gardens, so that only minarets of a few mosques can be seen above the foliage, and has an air of coolness and comfort exceedingly refreshing. The different tops of the Taurus range of mountains give additional charms to the scenery. But the city itself disappoints expectations. Its houses, with a few exceptions, are made of low mud walls, thatched with straw. Stagnant water is found in many of the gardens, which, in connection with the great amount of vegetable matter and the heat of the climate, renders it unhealthy. Broken fragments of marble and granite, and other ruins, bear witness to its ancient greatness. The inhabitants consist of 1,000 Fellah families, 40 or 50 Greek, 500 Mussulman, 300 or 350 Armenian, and a very few Jews.

STATE TAXES.—The state tax assessed for the expenditures of 1854, exclusive of state common schools, was \$1,780,190. There has been redeemed during the past year, \$700,000 of the state debt, and the total expenditure for extraordinary expenses, including the state house and lunatic asylums, is \$957,000. The interest discontinued by the payment of \$700,000 state debt, relieves the people of the state from an annual tax of \$50,000.—[O. Statesman.